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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0578
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RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUYNAAAC/COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA PRIORITY
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
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RUHBANB/OKINAWA FLD OFC US FORCES JAPAN CP BUTLER JA PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/USFJ PRIORITY
INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 2278
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 6065
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 7595
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RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 3615
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 3603
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UNCLAS TOKYO 000275

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: TOKYO MEDIA REACTION - "BUY AMERICAN"
PROVISIONS AND KYRGYZSTAN

11. LEAD STORIES: Lead stories on Thursday morning included Panasonic's decision to slash its workforce by 15,000 worldwide.

12. "Trade Protectionism Cannot Be Accepted" On the so-called "Buy American" provisions in the U.S. stimulus package, the top circulation, moderate Yomiuri editorialized (2/5): "Following the financial crisis last October, protectionist measures have been adopted by Russia, India, and other countries. A potential rise in protectionist sentiment in the U.S. would run the risk of stirring up a similar mood around the world. It would further prolong the global recession. President Obama should persuade Congress to strike down the provisions."

13. "U.S. Must Not Be Tempted into Accepting Protectionism" The liberal Asahi argued in an editorial (2/5): "Global leaders are likely to take up mounting calls for trade protectionism across the world in the upcoming G-20 financial summit in London in early April. President Obama needs to counter any protectionist moves at home ahead of the confab so that he can ask other summiteers for maintaining free trade. As the country which triggered the current worldwide recession, the U.S. must act responsibly."

14. "Russian Money Counts for Neighbors" On recent Kyrgyzstan's decision to close down a U.S. base, a Moscow-based reporter for the liberal Asahi wrote (2/5): "Russia is keen to exercise clout over the former republics of the defunct Soviet Union. Seven countries in the region agreed in Moscow on Wednesday to establish a joint rapid response military unit with the goal of making it a counterbalance to NATO. A success in Russia's attempt to bring together its neighbors again depends on whether Moscow can secure

enough money for them at a time when its state coffers are drying up rapidly due to the sharp fall in petroleum prices."

15. "Setback for Obama's Policy in Afghanistan" A Washington correspondent for the moderate Yomiuri reported (2/5): "The shutdown of a U.S. military installation in Kyrgyzstan is bound to have a serious impact on the Obama administration's war on terrorism, as the base has served as a supply hub for U.S. military operations in Afghanistan. Given that President Obama's plan to deploy additional troops in Afghanistan is premised upon the continued use of the Kyrgyz facility, the closure, if it occurs, could upset President Obama's top policy priority of stabilizing Afghanistan."

ZUMWALT